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In Global Solidarity

02.27.2012 | Service and Giving, International, Catholic, Hot Topics Catholic Relief Services considers the University of Dayton among the nation's Catholic institutions as having an established record of commitment to education, research, advocacy and service in the areas of global justice and peace.

In recognition, the official relief and humanitarian development arm of the Catholic Church that serves more than 100 million people in nearly 100 countries has invited the University of Dayton to pilot a new Scholars in Global Solidarity program.

"The partnership will build on the strengths of both institutions to develop faculty leadership in solving pressing global issues affecting the poor overseas. Although Catholic Relief Services and each Catholic college and university has its own distinct mission, each shares common concern for social justice and peace and educating for global responsibility. By linking our talents, we become a stronger force with even greater foresight in fighting poverty and injustice," said Mary Laver, program advisor for CRS.

The University of Dayton, along with the University of San Francisco and St. John's University in New York, will participate in the two-year Phase I to exchange expertise among faculty and CRS overseas staff and technical advisors.

"By sharing assets and resources, Scholars for Global Solidarity will take us to the next level in our work. This is a case when we are more than the sum of our parts. All benefit when social justice education is shared," said Joan Rosenhauer, executive CRS vice president for U.S. operations, who signed a partnership agreement with University of Dayton President Daniel J. Curran Monday, Feb. 27.

Faculty and technical teams will develop sustainable activities for their campuses that build from existing academic strengths. Faculty will travel with CRS for site-studies of programs and to meet staff and partners in the field.

"It's one thing when you talk about solidarity in the classroom, but it's quite different when you can give students exposure to people on the ground who are directly engaged in peacemaking or development work," said Vince Miller, University of Dayton Gudorf Chair in Catholic Theology and Culture.

Miller anticipates University of Dayton students in human rights studies, international studies, philosophy, religious studies, government, biology, engineering, sociology and anthropology, among others, will benefit from CRS resources. Students participating in Engineers in Technical Humanitarian Opportunities of Service-Learning (ETHOS); The New Abolitionist Movement, which was responsible in part for making human trafficking in Ohio a felony; international summer immersions through the Center for Social Concern; and Semester of Service will also benefit.

"The University of Dayton, in its Catholic, Marianist mission, seeks to develop a deeper sensitivity to the poor, marginalized and disenfranchised in our global society," Curran said. "We appreciate Catholic Relief Services for recognizing our commitment and record and look forward to working together to help prepare our students to adapt in a changing world and to use their knowledge and faith to create change that makes a difference."

Miller added the partnership will complement diversity, social justice and practical reasoning courses in the University's new common academic program, which will provide a broad undergraduate education based on Catholic, Marianist values. Some cornerstones of the program include providing a knowledge of major faith traditions; an ability to evaluate critically and imaginatively the challenges of the times; an appreciation for diversity through an understanding of the cultures, histories, times and places of others around the world; and an ability to see their lives as a vocation or calling.

Catholic Relief Services officials hope to expand Scholars in Global Solidarity to more schools in Phase II starting in 2014.

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